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THE LANGUAGE OF FREYTAG'S "DIE AHNEN."

In the study of modern literature a great deal has been done during the past few years in presenting to us a clearer and more comprehensive view of literature as a whole, and in giving a more accurate and detailed description of a certain period and its characteristics. Much has been done too in the history of literature by the many excellent biographies of individual writers, as these often contain new and valuable criticisms of the best known works of the various authors. There seems, however, to be a large field for investigation into the peculiarities of an author's language and style, as they appear growing and developing through all his works, or as these peculiarities appear at some particular period of his life, or in some particular work. Such a study is to literature what a study of technique is to painting.

Heinrich von Kleist wrote on April 25, 1811, to Fouqué: ". . . . Die Erscheinung, die am meisten bei der Betrachtung eines Kunstwerks rührt, dünkt mich, ist nicht das Werk selbst, sondern die Eigentümlichkeiten des Geistes, der es hervorbrachte, und der sich in unbewusster Freiheit und Lieblichkeit, darin entfaltet." However interesting or valuable a work may be to the general reading public, to the historian of literature and the literary critic the "Eigentümlichkeiten des Geistes" as they appear in the work, are of more importance than the finished product.¹ The peculiar characteristics of an author as they appear in his works differentiate him from the great mass of writers. As Buffon has said: "Le style, c'est l'homme."

We know that a certain writer created certain new expressions, or used them for the first time in literature. But how many did he so use, and how often? Are these expressions which have become permanent in literature? Are the peculiarities of an author those of his age, or did he employ certain peculiarities of language and style for a specific purpose? If so, with what success? Such a detailed study of the language and style of various authors should be of great value in giving

¹ Cf. Saintsbury—*Essays in English Literature, 1780-1860. Introduction.*

the necessary information for making comparison of various styles, of outlining definitely an author's originality in vocabulary and style, and in analyzing his qualities as pioneer or imitator. The following paper is a study of the peculiarities in the language of Gustav Freytag's *Die Ahnen*.

Gustav Freytag (1816-1895) wrote his series of historical novels, *Die Ahnen*, during the years 1872-1880. (Vol. I *Ingo und Ingraban*, 1872; Vol. II *Das Nest der Zaunkönige*, 1874; Vol. III *Die Brüder vom deutschen Hause*, 1875; Vol. IV *Marcus König*, 1876; Vol. V *Die Geschwister*, 1878; Vol. VI *Aus einer kleinen Stadt*, 1880).² Externally the work is a series of historical novels, each having a separate plot and each plot dealing with a separate period. (Vol. I Part I—357 A. D.; Part 2—724; Vol. II 1003; Vol. III 1226; Vol. IV 1519; Vol. V 1647 and 1721; Vol. VI 1805). According to Freytag's idea, however, the work is a history of the German people and their civilization, written in a series of chapters. Like Willibald Alexis, and especially like Scott, whom our author looked upon as his master, Freytag thought of the history of his people as a unit, and the various historical movements as manifestations of different characteristics of this unified people. The idea of unity and continuity in the history of his people led him to write *Die Ahnen*.³ The work essays to portray the history of a single family, the various members of which are bound together during succeeding generations by constantly recurring similarities in physiognomy, character and fate.

In speaking of *Die Ahnen* in an explanatory note appended to the final volume of the series, Freytag calls the series "a symphony in whose eight parts, (Vol. I and Vol. V each contain two parts) a melodic theme is varied, carried on, and interwoven with others, in such a manner that the several

² The editions of *Die Ahnen* from which quotations are made in this study, are as follows: Vol. I. 38. Aufl. 1908; Vol. II. 31. 1907; Vol. III. 26. 1908; Vol. IV. 21. 1906; Vol. V. 21. 1907; Vol. VI. 19. 1908. Published by Hirzel, Leipzig. A careful comparison of this thirty-eighth edition of Vol. I. with a copy of the first edition shows that absolutely no changes have been made.

³ Cf. Meyer—*Deutsche Literatur des 19. Jahrhunderts*. S. 403.

parts united constitute a whole." This "melodic theme" means to Freytag continuity of life and its various interests. This continuity of life and its interests had been impressed upon Freytag while he was preparing the material for his "Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit," which he used as basic studies for *Die Ahnen*.

The fact that Freytag portrays in this work German life of certain centuries or periods—many of which were far remote from his own—naturally led him to peculiarities of language and style which often become very marked. These peculiarities in language and style are often the local coloring by which the author portrays the age which he treats. Whether these are always used successfully and with the best taste will be considered later.

FOREIGN WORDS

The first topic treated in the study of *Die Ahnen* is the author's use of foreign words. This is not by any means the only work of Freytag where the attention of the reader is at once called to the use of foreign words. Hager in the Introduction to his edition of *Aus dem Staat Friedrichs des Grossen*⁴ says: "As regards Dr. Freytag's style . . . there is only one feature in it to which exception might be taken, viz., to the frequent use of foreign words. There is no objection to words of foreign origin which passed at an early stage into the language of the people and thus shared in the changes by which Teutonic words have been affected . . .

. . . There are, however, in the essay many words of foreign origin for which German has equivalents still in ordinary use, and for which there is therefore no necessity, even though long use may have made us familiar with many of them." In compiling a list of foreign words used by an author one must naturally ask, "What constitutes a foreign word in German?" A great many words now existing in the German language, and in current use, were once thoroughly foreign but have become so completely Germanized that they betray no trace of the foreign in accent, inflection or spelling. In making a list of the foreign words in *Die Ahnen*, the question as to whether

⁴D. C. Heath & Co. 1908.

a word is still foreign or has become thoroughly German is settled by adopting Heyse's *Fremdwörterbuch* as authority. If a word is listed in this book as a foreign word, then such authority is, for the purpose of this study, considered final. Naturally an absolute boundary line in this matter is hard to establish. A few words which have been counted in this list are quite thoroughly German, e. g. *Bischof* I, 342; *brav* V, 301; *Form* III, 350; *Marsch* V, 4; *Null* IV, 344; *Post* VI, 231; *Prinz* V, 377; *Punkt* V, 110; *Sammet* IV, 51; *Sekt* IV, 48, but inasmuch as they appear in Heyse, they are included in the complete list. Heyne's *Deutsches Wörterbuch* which does not regularly include foreign words contains each of the words mentioned above. Compound words containing a foreign element have also been included in this list, e. g. *Abendcollation* IV, 111; *Acciseinnehmer* VI, 6. Many times a word occurring more than once⁵ is spelled in two or more different ways, e. g. *Alarm* III, 232, *Allarm* IV, 367; *Discretion* V, 159, *Diskretion* VI, 25; *Exerciren* V, 275, *exercieren* VI, 297, *Exerzierplatz* VI, 187; *Paradise* III, 133, *Paradiese* III, 235. This change of spelling is especially noticeable in c and k before a consonant or before the vowels a, o, or u; in c and z before e or i; and -iren and -ieren. Many times a foreign word used for the second time will appear in a lengthened or shortened form or otherwise changed. Sometimes the first occurrence of the word shows the Germanized form while the next time it is in complete foreign dress, or vice versa: e. g. *Adjes* V, 102, *Adieu* V, 326; *Candidat* V, 175, *Candidatus* V, 422; *Capitän* V, 274, *Capitain* V, 276; *Duellium* IV, 101, *Duell* V, 285; *Licentiat* V, 100, *Licentiatius* V, 110; *Ruin* V, 155, *Ruine* IV, 73. Such change of spelling or form does not characterize a peculiar period or place or character, as e. g. in Vol. V, *Candidat* p. 175 and *Candidatus* p. 422 both occur in the narrative, and not in the mouth of any character; in Vol. V, p. 100 Hermann is described as "*Licentiatus*," ten pages later an "*Licentiat*."

In the complete list of words which was compiled (with the indication of the volume and page on which the word first

⁵ In the figures indicating totals such varying forms of a word are counted as only one word.

occurs) no attempt was made to show how many times a particular word occurs. Many of these words occur a number of times, especially in Vol. V, but only the first instance is counted.

The complete list of foreign words contains 1344 words, with the largest number coming from the French, the next largest from the Latin. Words are also found from Greek, Italian, Arabic, Polish and Russian. The complete list contains ninety-seven verbs in -i(e)ren. Freytag seems particularly fond of such verbs in Vol. V, dealing with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries—a period in which one would naturally expect to see strong French influence. Aside from these verbs in -i(e)ren the words used are principally nouns, abstract nouns in -tion being common.

Freytag has designedly omitted or used foreign words in the various volumes to portray faithfully the linguistic characteristics of the period with which the volume deals. In Vol. I which deals with the fourth century, there occur in the first part "Ingo" only 10 foreign words, in the second part "Ingraban" 26, making a total of only 36 in 514 pp. In Vol. V which deals, as stated above, with the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there occur 500 foreign words—mostly from the French—in 436 pp. This reckoning—taking account as it does of only the first occurrence of a foreign word—hardly presents in its full meaning the great difference between Vol. I and Vol. V in this respect. An actual count of every occurrence of a foreign word in Vol. V would raise the number here given by some hundreds. Thus Freytag succeeded in giving to Vol. V the foreign French flavor which so pervaded the literature of that age. In the matter of his characters too, Freytag has taken care that foreign words should be used principally by only such characters as would naturally use them. Henner and the scholars e. g. in Vol. III (Cf. p. 70) with their Latin training use many of them, while in that same volume they are much more rare in the speech of the common people.

Regarding the general use of foreign words in *Die Ahnen* one may say positively that Freytag was not careful to avoid

the use of them. His use of words in his writings is careful and exact so that he is often quoted by lexicographers, but he many times uses a foreign word when a German word would have expressed the same idea. Many of the foreign words found here were not current in the decade during which Freytag wrote these novels. Two important reasons may be advanced for the use of many foreign words. First, Freytag was a trained student of Latin. He had studied the early history of the drama⁶ and its development through the Middle Ages; he had given much time during his life to the study of historical records and chronicles.⁷ In such documents he must naturally have become acquainted with a large number of foreign words of Latin origin. Secondly, the scenes described often call for foreign words. The author had lived a large part of his life near the Polish border and many of the scenes of the novels presented life as the writer had seen it in his youth. Such descriptions make many words, more or less foreign, not only natural but necessary. The Crusades, life in the East, descriptions of Eastern civilization called for a vocabulary that must needs be composed of words not of Teutonic origin.

Freytag is usually regarded as a purist in style. He seldom wrote without giving careful attention to the words which he employed. His style contains few mannerisms. Clearness is certainly one of its characteristics. If clearness could best be attained by the use of a foreign word, Freytag seldom hesitated to employ it. He uses foreign words in *Die Ahnen* with discrimination, as shown above, and often obtains through them a local coloring, a milieu, which no other expedient in the use of language could have produced for him. His use of foreign words in *Die Ahnen* is justifiable.

In order to give some idea of the kind of foreign words used here by Freytag a specimen list of ten words from Vol. II-VI is presented. As Vol. I, Part I contains only 10 different foreign words the complete list is given.

⁶ Cf. Freytag's thesis: *De initiis scenicae poesis apud Geranos*. Berlin, 1838.

⁷ Freytag's *Bilder aus der deutschen Vergangenheit* were written (1859-1867) just before *Die Ahnen*.

Vol. I. Bronze I, 249; Bussard 175; Metall 38; Nosterpater 166; Protector 247; purpurrot 50, (two other compounds of purpur, Purpurzeichen 59, Purpurbild 59); Trabant 81; Vers 81. Except in the case of Protector p. 247 no German word could exactly replace the ideas expressed in these words. In the case of sixteen at least of the 26 different foreign words found in Vol. I, Part 2, no thoroughly German word could well be used.

Vol. II. Ambrosianum II, 114; Convent 48; Dekan 4; Dialektik 48; Dispens 197; Ductus 11; Gallerie 16; Grammatik 48; Hora 25; Kapsel 370.

Vol. III. Alarm III, 232; Asylrecht 218; Ceder 290; Chevalier 196; Collier 196; Devoir 89; Elephant 263; Kathedrale 349.

Vol. IV. Kreatur IV, 288; Mandat 151; memoriren 78; Musikant 74; Obscurant 176; Prädicant 185; Procent 51; protestiren 189; Recept 12; Scriptor 56.

Vol. V. Adoptiren V, 406; Affection 379; Alteration 425; arrogant 256; Censur 258; Commandeur 418; Commilito 25; Communication 323; dispensiren 384; Domestik 295; Gouverneur 387. As will be readily seen any one of these words from Vol. V could be replaced by a thoroughly German word with no loss of exactness in meaning. Of the 500 foreign words in this volume less than one-fifth are words without exact German equivalents.

Vol. VI. Française V, 169; illuminiren 5; Invalide 306; Jubiläum 350; Kanoe 189; konservieren 361; konföderiren 292; Material 41; Modell 183; parliren 75.

The foreign phrases used throughout the volumes are not numerous and show no particular tendency on the part of the writer. The following table shows the number of such phrases used in *Die Ahnen*, and the language from which they come.

	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	Total
Latin	6	12	4	15	6	1	44
Greek	1						1
French			1		1		2
Italian			1				1
Spanish					1		1
	7	12	6	15	8	1	49

The Latin phrases form here about 90% of the total number. In Vol. I the six Latin phrases (two are only single words) are used by the priest, or in connection with church affairs. In Vol. II the Latin phrases come naturally to the mouth of monks because of their familiarity with the church ritual. In Vol. IV, which deals with the sixteenth century, the Latin phrases found are used principally by the "Magister," who, as an educated man and as an educator, would use them readily.

PROPER NAMES

The names which a writer gives to the characters of his novel are of no mean importance and call for most careful attention. By the mere naming of a character an author may ascribe to that person qualities of considerable significance in the development of the plot. Many writers of note have given great care to the details of this matter. In the "Literarisches Echo" Klaiber writes in an article entitled, "Die Namen im Roman":⁸ "Da sind die Gesetze des Wohllauts und des Klangsinn, die in Betracht kommen. Da soll der Name dazu helfen, die Person zu charakterisieren Vom modernen Roman erwarten wir, dass auch die Nebenpersonen bis auf den Namen hinaus individualisiert sind. So wissen wir von Gustav Freytag, dass er das Addressbuch von Galizien durchstöberte, um für eine seiner Nebengestalten (Schmeie Tinkles) in 'Soll und Haben' einen recht jüdisch-polnischen Namen zu finden. Auch andere Gestalten in 'Soll und Haben,' vor allem, Anton Wohlfahrt und Sabine Schröter, sind vom Dichter so getaucht, dass der Widerschein ihres Wesens in ihrem Namen aufleuchtet." In speaking of the choice of proper names for a work Meyer says:⁹ "Zur Beurteilung der lautsymbolischen Feinheit von Schriftstellern dient besonders deren Namenwahl, d. h. die Wahl von Eigennamen für ihre Personen und Orte, und noch mehr ihre Namengebung, d. h. die Erfindung weiterer Namen in gleicher Absicht. . . ., andere Virtuosen der Kunst, durch frei gewählte Namen die Atmosphäre, die ihre Helden umgibt, zu bestimmen sind, z. B. Gustav Freytag u. a."

⁸ Literarisches Echo V, S. 1311-15. 1903.

⁹ Meyer, R. M.—Deutsche Stylistik S. 29.

A consideration and comparison of the proper names which Freytag gives to the characters of the first seventy pages of Volumes I and VI will give an excellent idea of the distinct atmosphere which Freytag would create for his novels by means of proper names. That the events of Vol. I are supposed by the writer to have occurred in the year 357 A. D., and those of Vol. VI in 1805 is very clearly indicated in a general way by the names of the characters.

Vol. I. Answald p. 7, Irmfried 7, Bisino 7, Frida 11, Irmgard 11, Hildebrand 18, Hnodomar 19, Athanarich 19, Gundrun 21, Ingo 21, Ingbert 21, Siegfried 24, Theodulf 28, Isanbart 36, Aimo 50, Arnfried 50, Archimbald 51, Eggo 51, Bero 65, Albwin 66, Turibert 68.

Vol. VI. Baron Hille p. 10, Kapitän von Buskow 12, Henriette 28, Käthe 29, Bärbel 31, Liesel 31, (Mamsell) Jettchen 35, Katharine 39, (Herr) Beblow 45, Christian 50, Hans 54, (Herr) Hutzel 57, Kapitän Dessale 61, Meister Schilling 63, Steinmetz 64.

In using such names as those given from Vol. I, Freytag is always careful to give to a character a name which befits his office, or part in the plot. Many even of the minor characters bear names which well suit their words and actions. In Vol. I Answald is equivalent to God-prince,¹⁰ Hildebrand, Battle sword, Gundrun, Battle enchantress, Ingbert, Noble-divine, Siegfried, Bringer of peace through victory, Theodulf, Folk-wolf—all of which represent quite exactly qualities of character, or the office of the individual in the plot. Sometimes a name has both a Germanized and a Latin form, as Pancraz IV, 63, Pancratius IV, 315; Gregor V, 391, Gregorius IV, 16. The double name, i. e. Christian name and surname, occurs for the first time in Bertram Schultheiss III, 88.

ARCHAISMS

In a series of novels like these, which portray the life of the people of earlier centuries one would naturally expect to find archaic language. It is one of the most effective means of

¹⁰ Derivations and meanings here given are taken from Heintze, Albert—*Die deutsche Familiennamen*. 3. Aufl. Halle, 1908; and Letzner—*Namenbuch*. 2 Aufl. Leipzig, 1894.

putting the reader into the atmosphere of that earlier time. Archaic language is distinctly characteristic of these volumes, especially the first two.

On the question of Freytag's success in the use of archaic features in *Die Ahnen* critics have differed widely. Adolf Stern¹¹ writes regarding this work: "Ohne allzustarke Archaismen klingen die Geschichten aus der Zeit der Völkerwanderung und der ersten Verkündigung der christlichen Lehre auf deutschem Boden, der Empfindung und dem Ton unserer alten Dichtung nach." It seems much better, however, to agree with those who believe that Freytag has failed of the highest success in the use of archaic features here. Meyer¹² writes: ". . . . besonders die Anfangsbände von Freytags Ahnen haben durch ihr (d. h. der Archaismen) Übermass sogar den Spott heraus gefordert" Gottschall¹³ believes: "Ingo (Vol. I) ist leider durch Archaismen entstellt." He calls the style "undeutsch" (p. 338). Such criticisms are too severe, though the archaic features in the earliest volumes attract the reader's attention to such an extent as to make the style appear labored, especially in the word order and the use of archaic words. Cf. "Ich trage Kunde, die das Herz der Männer bewegt, nicht weiss ich, ob sie Freude bereitet oder Trauer" (I, 19), and "Spende wegemüdem Mann den Trunk aus deinem Born" (I, 18). Freytag himself, in his *Erinnerungen*,¹⁴ discusses carefully this use of archaic words and word order, stating that this style came to him naturally in the description of the life of the earlier periods.

The archaic features are here presented under four captions—(1) Archaic forms, (2) Archaic meanings, (3) Archaic constructions, (4) Obsolete or obsolescent words.

(1) ARCHAIC FORMS¹⁵

Verbs:—Many times the older forms of verbs occur where N. H. G. would use a more modern form, as *bedräut* I, 113,

¹¹ Stern, A.—*Die deutsche Nationalliteratur* S. 114. 5. Aufl. 1905.

¹² Meyer, R. M.—*Deutsche Stylistik*. S. 8.

¹³ Gottschall—*Deutsche Nationalliteratur* des 19. Jhts. II, 432.

¹⁴ G. Freytag—*Erinnerungen*. Leipzig, 1887. S. 363 ff.

¹⁵ The list below quotes only a single example in most cases, though

beut I, 156, gebeut VI, 265, brimmend for brummend, ein brimmender Bär I, 52. Cf. M. H. G. and M. E. brimmen. däucht I, 71. Verb forms like lud, ward, frug etc. are not regarded as distinctly archaic features in Die Ahnen, as such forms are common in literature.

Nouns:—Vor Abends I, 10 for Vor Abend. Fels as dative in, auf steilem Fels III, 335. Rare as dative. Cf. Curme, Grammar p. 74. Gemahl for Gemahlin III, 60; das Ehegemahl for die Gemahlin III, 64. Gurt for later Gürtel I, 86; Leibgurt I, 337. Der Quell for later die Quelle I, 136. Wittfrau for Wittwe V, 257. The archaic Wittib does not occur. Plural of Jahr in same form as singular II, 30.

Adjectives:—Occasional weak endings where we should expect strong. Dies Wenige I, 332. Mehre always for mehrere. Cf. I, 199 et al. Peinvoll I, 256 for modern peinlich.

Adverbs:—Abseit I, 57 for abseits (Abseit, a seventeenth century form according to Grimm). Allerdinge II, 406 for allerdings. Niemalen IV, 284. Strack (biblical word) IV, 100 rare as adverb.

Numerals:—The numerals zwei, drei, and vier are frequently inflected throughout the plural. Cf. zweier Stiere III, 124; dreien Königen II, 361.

ARCHAIC MEANINGS¹⁶

Verbs:—Bessern for verbessern, ausbessern I, 117, 460, 504 et al; denken for zudenken, Wenn du mir Übles gedacht hast I, 188. einen feindselig denken for gegen einen feindselig gesinnt sein II, 26. fahren used to express various motions and modes of travel whether by vehicle or otherwise und doch fuhr die Keule zurück I, 38; wenn dein Zorn feindlich hinter mir fährt II, 192; obgleich du

many times a great many might be quoted. Nor does this list give one example of every archaic peculiarity noted. Of the complete list collected the following show the character of the archaisms.

¹⁶ In connection with the discussion of the archaic meanings of words and the choice of special words, a very careful and painstaking list for Vol. II is given by Roedder and Handschin in their recent edition of "Das Nest der Zaunkönige" pp. 235-242. D. C. Heath & Co. 1912.

unbändig dahinfährst, for dich benimmst II, 34. In such cases Freytag follows the usage of O. H. G. and M. H. G. gesellen for zugesellen, dass der Fürst sich den Edlen meines Volkes geselle I, 55. künden for verkünden, auskünden. Ich will dem Fremden deine Botschaft künden I, 84-5. lodern for brennen. Usual form now is auffodern. Cf. I, 190 et al. löschen for auslöschen, ein Feuer aufgebrannt war, welches schwerlich durch klugen Rat gelöscht wurde I, 133. richten for aufrichten, errichten. Vor dem Saale des Königs war der Opferstein gerichtet I, 250. teilen for zuteilen, denn die Götter teilen dem Mann sein Schicksal nach seinen Gedanken I, 59. versteinen in the sense of abgrenzen I, 123. verweilen, transitive use for verhindern, Verweilt mich nicht IV, 388. ziehen for abziehen, Ich fand ihn auf der Strasse, zog die Mütze und ging stolz hinab IV, 134. An observation of the archaic features noted here shows that Freytag often used a simple verb to convey a number of shades of meaning which are now definitely designated by a prefix.

Nouns:—Fräulein, old use for kleine Frau. Wir merken auch, dass manche von ihnen Männlein sind, und andere Fräulein V, 107. Himmelsburg for Himmel II, 72. Landgenoss for Landsmann II, 334. Meinung for Gesinnung. Welche Meinung hat Graf Gerhard zu dir? II, 318. Mond for Monat I, 24. Mut for the English mood, disposition as in M. H. G. Ein schweres Geschick bereitet ein Gott, oder des Mannes trotziger Mut I, 20. Modern usage still retains this meaning in "zu Mute sein." Obstträger for Obstbaum II, 123. Werk for Taten II, 28. Wille for Absicht, der König naht in feindlichem Willen, um den Raub zu rächen II, 349.

Adjectives:—der Gebundene for der Gefangene II, 393. hold for lieb II, 127. Schlecht for schlicht II, 28. tröstlich sein for trösten II, 316. übel for böse, schlimm II, 24. ungefüge for unschön II, 63. wert for lieb II, 24. wunderbar for erstaunlich II, 59.

A number of other more or less archaic features are found: ab und zu I, 242 as adverb of place; auf dass for the modern dass I, 244 et al.; wie lang ich lebe for seit ich lebe I, 217, etc.

ARCHAIC CONSTRUCTIONS

Freytag shows a tendency to use verbs with a case which they formerly governed (especially the genitive) instead of the modern accusative. The following are regularly found with the genitive: *achten*, *begehren*, *denken*, *erinnern*, *freuen*, *geniessen*, *sich gewöhnen*, *harren*, *lachen*, *schonen*, *vergessen*, *walten*, *warten*. *Hängen* and the preposition *an* with the dative for *abhängen von* occur in, *So weit es an dem Willen der Nachbarn hängt* I, 223. *bitten* with a direct object instead of *um*, *Wer gewöhnt ist, fremdes Gewand zu bitten* I, 28-9. *sich neigen* with dative for *sich vor jemand verneigen* I, 12. *wehren* for usual *sich wehren* I, 51.

OBSOLETE OR OBSOLESCENT WORDS

There occur here many obsolete or obsolescent words which give to the narrative an archaic tinge. *Bändigen* for *hindern*, *fesseln* II, 384; *blinzen* for *blinzeln* I, 190; *ehelichen* for *heiraten* V, 257; *Born* I, 18; *Brautlauf* for *Hochzeit* I, 169; *Eidam* for *Schwiegersohn* I, 168; *Elend* in its original meaning of "foreign land" I, 17; *Gerstange*, Cf. *M. H. G. gêr*; *Met* I, 26; *Minne* III, 15; *Unhold* for *Teufel* I, 425; *Walstatt* for *Schlachtfeld* I, 10 et al.; *reisemüde* I, 153; *wegemüde* I, 12; *traun* I, 76; *weiland* IV, 335; *dreissig und ein* I, 342. One might mention here the use of such epithets as *langhaarig* I, 314, *pfeilschnell* III, 190. *Langhaarig* is well applied to the early Germans but its use as a descriptive epithet may easily have been in imitation of Homer. Cf. *Odyssey* II, 7 et al. *Pfeilschnell* is also an Homeric epithet.

Aside from these specific archaic features there are more general ones which tend to give both style and content an archaic tone. These are most common in the earliest volumes. In some cases they seem artificial¹⁷ though literary critics have recognized such means as legitimate when used with discretion.¹⁸ The following list includes some of the most important: Description of customs characteristic of early German life, more or less definite reference to early German mythology, description of early German weapons (Cf. *Keule*,

¹⁷ Lindau, H. Gustav Freytag. Leipzig, 1907. S. 194.

¹⁸ Seiler, Fr. Gustav Freytag. Leipzig, 1898. S. 179 ff.

Gêr); the names of animals common to the period. Such features transplant the reader directly into the time of the narrative and are more effective than even archaic words or word order.

One might naturally conclude these observations on archaisms by stating that there are certain rather common archaic words and forms which do not appear at all in *Die Ahnen*. So is neither found as a relative, nor used for the conjunction *wenn*; *denn* is not used for *als* after comparatives, nor *do da* or its compounds occur with relative force. Obsolete preterit forms like *sahe* in the third singular are not found, and the uninflected neuter adjective is rare. Forms like *gêtz*, *Wittib*, *dieweil*, *empfahren*, *jedwede*, *schier*, do not occur.

LIEBLINGSWÖRTER

Though Freytag's style is characterized by few mannerisms, yet he does show in the work under discussion a marked fondness for particular words and particular kinds of words. These favorites appear so frequently that they become quite monotonous, as when *versetzen* is used in the sense of "answer," or "reply" two or three times on a single page. Cf. I. 125, 132, 133, 134, 139, 153, 154, 155, 158, 162, 165, 166, 167, 168, 171, 178, 180, 184, 186, 188, 192, 194, 195, 196. This is true of such verbs as *kränken* and *drängen*. The verb *bergen* occurs in *Die Ahnen* with great frequency and has a variety of meanings. Besides its use to convey the idea of concealing, hiding or covering, it is used in the sense of *übertragen*, *unterbringen*, *einstecken*, *verbergen*, *verheimlichen* etc.

The following list (without citing references or number of instances, or any details) gives some of the more striking of the favorite words and phrases.

Verbs:—*Behaupten*, *bergen*, *drängen*, *kränken*, *spenden* (used often where we might expect only *geben*, used also for *schenken*, *erteilen*, *verschaffen*), *verderben*, *versetzen*. Freytag often uses here a simple verb where we should most certainly expect a compound one, as e. g. *(ab)fangen*, *(auf)fornern*, *(er)greifen*, *(ver)handeln*, *(ein)laden*, *(er)lösen*,

(ver)mindern, (ver)wehren, (zurück)werfen where the prefix is regularly omitted in *Die Ahnen*.

Nouns:—Certain compound nouns are of remarkable frequency of occurrence. Compounds with *Herr(en)-* are numerous. Cf. *Herrenaxt*, -bank, -feind, -grund, -metall, -wunde, -zins etc. in which the element *Herr(en)-* seems to have little specific force; numerous compounds with *Himmel-*, with *Hof-*, with *Holz-*. Compounds with *Mann(es)-*, *Menschen-*, *Männer-* are especially striking. In Vol. I, for example, *Männererde* occurs twenty-nine times for “world,” *Menschenerde* three times, while the word *Welt* occurs but seven times in the whole volume. These compounds of *Männer-* and *Menschen-* were without doubt used that the language might appear more like that used by the early Germans. Cf. O. H. G. *mank(ch)unni* for *Menschengeschlecht*; Gothic *manasēps*, *Welt*. Cf. also the Icelandic compounds in *maðr-*.

Among the *Lieblingswörter* one may well mention certain adjectives. In this work the author shows great fondness for the power of the adjective.¹⁹ Many adjectives (the form being compounded by the author in some cases) bear the brunt of the meaning of their phrases. Cf. *aalgleich* III, 17, *esslustig* III, 163, *fadenscheinig* I, 425, *flachsköpfig* I, 144, *glückverheissend* III, 207, *gramdurchtfurcht* III, 90 *hemdsärmelig* I, 144. The adjectives *ansehnlich*, *vierschrotig* and compounds in *-selig* are conspicuous because of their frequent use. For the same reason the following phrases (or slight variations of them) are noticeable: *aufs neue*, *ins Freie*, *in gestrecktem Laufe*, *mit geflügelten Schritten*, *mit gefalteten Händen*.

PHRASES

From early German times down to the present, combinations of two nouns (or sometimes other parts of speech), connected by *und*, have been common to the language. In many of these combinations the meaning of the individual words has been merged into the meaning of the phrase. Cf. German, *Mann und Maus*; English, *Chick and child*. Such phrases

¹⁹ Cf. Meyer—*Deutsche Stylistik* S. 50. “*Freytags Verwendung der Bildung neuer Beiwörter.*” Cf. also, Schönbach, A. S.—*Gesammelte Aufsätze*. S. 65.

are found in great abundance in *Die Ahnen*, and by their skilful use impart a thoroughly German flavor to a work, whose main object is to portray German civilization. In Vol. I ninety-nine different phrases of this nature have been noted, some of which occur as many as fourteen times. When used as a subject such a phrase sometimes has a singular verb. Cf. *Frage und Antwort* klang I, 151.

As the last feature of Freytag's use of words here we might mention that feature touched upon by Lindau²⁰ in his biography of Freytag: "Spruchweisheit und liederartige Form treten zumal an den wichtigen Stellen hervor." Throughout the volumes there are found pithy, proverbial sayings. These by their simplicity and directness are often suggestive of the older language, but they are in many cases only a favorite way in which Freytag casts his thought. Often these phrases could not be called more than "Gedankensplitter"²¹ as they have not become real proverbs. They express pithily and laconically what is proverbial in thought if not in form. A large number of these expressions pertain to animals and their habits, and to nature and natural phenomena. In the earliest volumes many are connected with fighting, hunting and such occupations as were common among the early Germans. Thus they give local coloring as well as conciseness to the thought. Cf. *Wenn der Wolf tanzt, fliegen die Gänse auf den Baum und lachen* I, 14; *Edlen Sinn bindet nur Vertrauen* I, 78 (Quoted by Lipperheide—*Spruchwörterbuch*, Berlin, 1907 p. 940b, as original in *Die Ahnen*); *In der Not dient schnelle Tat* I, 184 etc. A rather full list of these Sententious or Proverbial Sayings shows the following numbers: Vol. I, 120; Vol. II, 80; Vol. III, 66; Vol. IV, 61; Vol. V, 36; Vol. VI, 12.

Pennsylvania State College. HARRY T. COLLINGS.

NOTE. Since this article was written (1910) a German thesis has appeared, dealing in detail with a portion of the subject. Posern, A. *Der altertümelnde Stil in den ersten drei Bänden von Gustav Freytags Ahnen*. (Diss.) Greifswald. 1913. 8vo. 84 pp.

²⁰ Lindau, Hans. *Gustav Freytag*. Leipzig, 1907. S. 301.

²¹ Cf. Sommer, Paul. *Erläuterungen zu Gustav Freytags Die Ahnen*. Leipzig, 1905.